Make Homework a Positive Learning and Family Experience

When it comes to helping children with homework, parents need to remind themselves what help really means.

- The best homework help is support
- Parent should not do the homework nor should children be left to sink or swim
- In education the "scaffolding of instruction" is an accepted strategy for successful learning. In scaffolding the teachers initially provides a high degree of support and gradually takes the support away leading to independent learning. The real goal of education is to create self actualized learners that are capable and willing to work independently. Teacher should have conversations with parents even of young children and help them understand this learning goal, but also emphasize their critical role in providing help and support when needed.

Environment and approach to homework is an important aspect of homework:

- Start the after-school homework session by planning and scheduling the afternoon and evening. "Do the toughest things early,"
- Have a good place to study, desk or table, well light and in a quiet room stocked with the right tools (e.g., dictionary, paper, pencils, calculators, access to information)
- Go over all the details and expectations, this accomplishes two things: 1) You will know if your child understands the assignment expectations and 2) you will know when he/she has accomplished each assigned task
- When a child is fidgety while working on a tough math assignment take a break – go for a walk - have a snack – talk about other aspects of life

You are in partnership with your child's teachers

- Work closely with teacher to know the typical assignment cycle and expectations
- Teachers and parents should have a conversation about expectations – these may vary from teacher to teacher
- · Communicate your support of teachers to you child

Establish an effective homework system in your house:

Maintain two-way communication.

- Set goals with not for your child, and tackle them one at a time. Begin with the goals your child is almost guaranteed to achieve, this builds confidence
- Expect progress. If your expectations for your child are low, your child's achievements will likely match them. Keep expectations high but reasonable.

Celebrate achievement and learning. Honest praise means more than a treat for every accomplishment, but if your child works especially hard, celebrate the learning accomplished.

- Praise generously and honestly. "Praise will lose its effectiveness if used indiscriminately," Be specific with your praise.
- Try not to show disappointment if your child does not do as well as you expect.
- The important thing is that you show appreciation for effort not just performance. A child who performs poorly does not need reminding.
- Celebrate learning not completing homework